

HISTORICAL RECITAL MANUSCRIPT

SLOCUM MONUMENT

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HISTORICAL RECITAL MANUSCRIPT

SLOCUM MONUMENT

EXTENSION DIVISION

INDIANA UNIVERSITY

1933

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Historical Recital Manuscript

Extension Division Indiana University

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SLOCUM MONUMENT

First Speaker

We are assembled by the Slocum monument, near the site of the Slocum cabin. Here the White Rose of the Miamis spent the last of her life. Here she sleeps forever by the beautiful Mississinewa, which she loved so well. This scenic river--named "falling waters" in the graphic Miami language, Mississinewa--flowed here bordered by these same old trees, exactly then as now. This wonderful ever-flowing spring still gives forth its sparkling waters just as when it quenched the thirst of Frances Slocum for more than a generation right there by the door of her humble cabin.

This was the heart of the great Miami nation when Frances Slocum came. And for more than a hundred years before, when history first shed its light upon this spot, it was the very center of a mighty wilderness empire. The valley of the Wabash with its tributaries was the domain of the Miamis. Here they lived in wilderness security.

The savage Iroquois, the fierce Five Nations of the East, who had been for generations the scourge of this western wilderness, were conquered and forever driven back by these Miamis and their allies, the Illinois Tradition tells of one great final battle on the lower Wabash, just after the coming of the first historic white man two centuries and a half ago. Its result was a decisive victory for these Miamis and their allies. There is well supported tradition also of earlier episodes of that mighty struggle occurring about this very spot.

We may feel our welcome here in the Miami spirit greeting coming from the very ground on which we stand.

Miami! What wealth of history
This name suggests! Here, in years
A hundred past and more,
The red forebears of your possessions
Roamed the virgin wood, and called it Home.
Here, in primal glory, ere white man's craft
Had fashioned this, your country,
Lived we, the Miamis.
Here fierce aggression found us out
From savage Delaware;
And painted Iroquois, with blood-lust rampant,
Dyed the very ground on which you tread
With blood of our brave warriors;
Until for vengeance, we, the red men of the Valley
Rose in fearful strength
To smite our ancient foe,
And blot them from the earth.
Here on scenes of bloody conflict
You come now, to re-enact
The story of our domain.

Second Speaker

Let us begin our recital of history in this place with the year 1778, in the most glamorous days of the American Revolution. In the fall of that year, the British Hairbuyer passed through this region with an army of Royal Redcoats and painted Redskins. Down the Hoosier Wabash, he came with his armed flotilla, loaded with warlike supplies for Indians. He stopped at the mouth of the Mississinewa about November 1 or 2, 1778, to counsel with the Miamis of this place. With flattering speeches and many presents, he besought their aid in crushing all American settlements here in the west and in delivering a death blow to the Revolution by raiding the Allegheny frontier.

These proud Redmen smoked the pipe of peace with the Hairbuyer and listened gravely to his speeches. But they did not join him. It was not their fight. They were too proud to raise the tomahawk in any cause that was not their own. Thus they justified the high character given them by Father Marquette, who had spent the last days of his sainted life among them over a hundred years before. He said of them compared with other tribes of the West:

"The Miamis are the most civil, the most liberal, and the most shapely. They wear two long locks over their ears, which give them a pleasing appearance. They are regarded as warriors, and rarely undertake expeditions without being successful. They are very docile and listen quietly to what is said to them."

Thus, too, did our proud Miamis here sustain the commendation of the princely La Salle, knight of the Golden Age of France. He had counselled with them almost a century before and formed their alliance with the Illinois by which they had crushed the ruthless Iroquois. La Salle said:

"The Miamis are the most civilized of all Indian nations--neat of dress, splendid of bearing, haughty of manner, holding all other tribes as inferiors."

And, so, in those great days of 1778 did this great and simple people live, untroubled by any, red or white, secure in the forest fastnesses of this Indian Paradise.

Third Speaker

Now let us shift the scene in place but not in time. A thousand miles from here at Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, where the Susquehanna flows through the beautiful Wyoming Valley of Eastern Pennsylvania, a white girl five years of age was taken captive by Indians--November 2, 1778--the same year and week, perhaps the same day that the wise Miamis here counselled with the British. The child was Frances Slocum.

Her father, Jonathan Slocum, a simple Quaker, with his wife and ten children lived without fear in that wild valley, having moved there the year before from Rhode Island where Frances was born in March, 1773. Although nearly all the white people of the valley had been killed by the Indians in the awful Wyoming Valley Massacre of July 3, 1778, the home of Jonathan Slocum had been unmolested because of his non-combative Quaker principles. But the Indians learned that Giles Slocum, the eldest son, 19 years old, had helped fight against them in the massacre and Indians never forget.

So three Delaware Indians suddenly invaded that quiet home early in the afternoon of November 2, 1778, while the father and older boys were away. Two neighbor boys were there grinding a knife before the door. One of them, who was wearing a soldier's coat, was instantly shot and scalped with the knife he was grinding. The terrified family fled, the mother snatching baby Jonathan from the cradle and Mary, ten years old, carrying little Joseph who was two. Frances and Ebenezer, a lame boy of 12, tried to hide under the stairway. The Indians plundered the house and seeing Frances' feet protruding from under the stairway took her and Ebenezer captive.

The mother knew they would kill Ebenezer who could not walk far or fast. She came out from hiding with heart-rending appeals. Pointing to his feet, she said: "See, he is lame. He can do thee no good." Strangely enough, they left him; but one of them threw Frances over his shoulder and they ran rapidly with her into the forest. The frantic mother's last view of her child was as she looked back over the Indian's shoulder, one hand brushing back her thick chestnut hair from her face, as she often did, and the other reaching out, as she cried, "Mamma, mamma." This touching picture was indelibly impressed on the memory of the stricken mother through the remaining thirty years of her life.

"And in the chambers of the soul
One picture memory laid --
A child--one hand among her curls;
The other stretched for aid!"

Fourth Speaker

There was a small fort about half a mile from the Slocum home. The alarm was soon given and a quick search made. But the savages had fled far into the dark forests, where it was dangerous to follow.

There is food for poetic fancy in the feelings of the bereaved family as the broken circle met and recalled the well remembered ways of that favorite child--mocking the birds, playing by the rill and making echoes with her childish voice.

"They missed her when the morning came
To wake the voice of birds;
She was not there to mock their song
With her soft and simple words.

"She was not there with acorn cups
Beside the woodland rill,
Calling aloud to hear her voice
Re-echo from the hill.

"They had been there--the forest men!
And from her mother's breast
They tore the darling of her love--
The warbler from her nest.

"When evening came, the circle met
And wept with anguish sore;
They hoped--threw hope away, and then
Retired to dream it o'er."

Another terrible tragedy befell this ill-fated home in six short weeks. On December 16, 1778, Jonathan Slocum, the father, and Isaac Tripp, the grandfather, who lived with them, were killed and scalped while working in their fields. Thus the heartbroken woman was thrice bereft by Indians--a daughter lost, her husband and her father slain. She became resigned to the fate of the loved ones--husband and father, whom she knew death had taken; but what of Frances? She could not know, but she believed the child still lived and she never ceased to hope and search.

Her seven sons, as they grew to manhood did all they could to find the lost sister. When the Revolutionary War ended, treaties were made with the Indians and many captives were freed. In 1784, two of the older boys made a trip of several weeks far into the northern Indian wilds, near Niagara Falls. They were men of means and offered large rewards for the discovery of Frances, but without avail. In 1785, they made a similar trip into the western Indian wilderness of Ohio but did not find her.

During this time, hundreds of white captives were released for whom little or no search was being made. But where was Frances? She was persistently pursued by a mother's constant love and by the faithful efforts of seven manly brothers but she had left no trace.

Fifth Speaker

In 1789, the government ordered an assemblage of many Indian tribes with their white captives at Tioga Point (now Athens, Pennsylvania), so that parents might reclaim their lost children. The devoted mother, then 53 years old, made the long and laborious journey herself to this assembly with her sons and stayed several weeks visiting every wigwam and looking earnestly into the face of every girl about sixteen years old--the age of Frances then--but all in vain. She returned home in deepest sorrow.

Still she did not despair. Hope lived on and her memories were ever fresh and green. Out of a mother's tender care, she recalled again and again that when Frances was taken she was barefooted, although she had a pair of new shoes that were kept for cooler weather; and her heart ached at the thought of the bruised little feet.

Frances was never to wear shoes again. But it is too bad that the sorrowing mother could not have known that her tender feet never suffered during her 69 years with the Indians. She was carried turn-about by the warriors on the captive flight; and after her adoption, she always had the best of moccasins. Her feet fared better than if she had lived in a civilized home.

Joaquin (Waukee) Miller was born near here on the Mississinewa and spent his early childhood years wearing moccasins not many miles from this place while Frances Slocum, then an aged woman, was making moccasined tracks upon every foot of this ground where we are now. After he became the famed "Poet of the Sierras," he wrote:

"Moccasins are the very best footwear in the world. There is a whole lot of nonsense in the idea that shoes shape the feet best. The Indians have always worn moccasins and they have shapely and perfect feet. The Indian women have really the prettiest, smallest and most perfect and shapely feet in America."

Frances Slocum's picture painted by a Hoosier artist on this spot in her extreme old age shows that she had small and shapely feet.

Sixth Speaker

The years passed but the search did not cease. In 1791, one of the brothers went with an agent of the War Department to the Cornplanter's settlement on the head waters of the Allegheny to search for Frances but did not find her. In 1793, another brother visited Buffalo to attend an Indian treaty, with the same want of success. In 1797, they made their most determined effort. Four of the brothers spent the entire summer on a trip through the north and west to Detroit and into Canada taking a drove of cattle and some goods for barter to disguise their mission. They divided their routes and combed that vast region thoroughly. Though they returned discouraged and disheartened, they made a similar effort the next year to the north and east. But they could not find a clew.

The mother was growing old and feeble but her hope did not diminish. A white woman, who had lived with Indians came to her to find a home, claiming she was the lost Frances. But the mother could not be deceived. This was not her child; yet she made the stranger welcome:

"Stay with me as long as thee pleases," she said, "perhaps someone may extend the like kindness to my dear Frances."

The woman remained a few months and then disappeared.

The sorrowing mother passed away in 1807 at the age of 71. All ten of her children were still living, but one of them had been lost for over 29 years. On her death bed Mrs. Slocum pledged her seven sons and two daughters never to abandon the quest for the lost Frances.

They were faithful to the trust and continued their fruitless efforts. It was learned long afterwards that they were many times not far from Frances and often dealt with Indians who knew all about her; but nothing could penetrate the veil of Indian secrecy. It was a wilderness mystery.

In 1826, they made a tiresome and expensive trip to the Wyandott settlement at Sandusky, Ohio, where the Christian chief, "Between the Logs," lived with a mysterious white wife. She was not Frances. The country was being settled; the Indians were disappearing. Would they ever find her?

They searched through many a forest wild
And swelling rivers crossed;
But still the years brought on their wings
No tidings of the lost.

Age sprinkled on their heads its frost
They cherished still that name;
But from the forests of the West
No tale of Frances came.

Seventh Speaker

Our stage of romance and history now shifts back to this historic site. The time is 1835. Fifty-seven years had flown since little Frances had been spirited away from her happy childhood home on the distant Susquehanna. Fifty-seven years had passed since the great Miamis in the pride of their power had counselled with the British here and rejected the tempting offers of the Hairbuyer.

Wonderful are the ways of fate and stranger than fiction is historic truth oft times. Out of this wilderness of the Mississinewa, from the very ground upon which we stand was to flash forth by singular chance the discovery for which the strong and faithful brothers had vainly sought through more than half a century.

This was still the home of the Miamis but most of their pride and strength had vanished. Right where we now are was Deaf Man's Village--home of She-po-con-ah-- the deaf old chief who had died two years before and was buried with his two sons on this hill nearby. Right here between his grave and the river stood his log cabin home near the ever-flowing spring, which was here then as now. In that double log cabin, rather large for an Indian hut and surrounded by some smaller buildings, lived Ma-con-aqua, the aged chieftainess of the Deaf Man, with her two daughters and their families. The home and the village were here because of that wonderful spring.

Civilization was encroaching upon this Indian domain and civil government had come. In that same year, 1835, Wabash County was legally organized and its boundaries made to include this site. Within that year also Miami County was fully organized and Peru named and started as a town site to be the county seat. The Wabash and Erie Canal was then in course of construction through these two counties. White Men's trading posts were scattered all about.

To this Deaf Man's Village came one night in January, 1835, Colonel George W. Ewing, a prominent trader, from the little town of Logansport. He spent a night here in the home of old Ma-con-aqua and the great discovery was made. Thus the poet graphically portrays this historic and romantic setting.

Night shrouds the western wilderness--
A traveller is there;
And worn and wearied much he begs
The red man's fire to share.

Within the hut sits one who seems
Of something fair the wreck;
No Indian trace was in her hair,
Nor olive on her neck.

The stranger asked her if her home
In childhood's day had been
Within the red man's smoky hut,
With barbarous kith and kin.

She said the red man's cot was not
The home her childhood knew;
Penn's glorious sky once o'er her hung
Its canopy of blue.

Eighth Speaker

The most graphic account of how the strange story of Frances Slocum came from the lips of old Ma-con-a-quah right here on that wintry night was written for the Slocum family records in 1877. It was written by Honorable Kendrick B. Wright, who once represented the Wilkes-Barre district of Pennsylvania in the United States Congress. It is an authentic account of what Colonel Ewing told him in Washington City in 1853 about what happened here where we now are on that winter night in 1835. I shall recite his exact words.

Colonel Ewing said that he had been on an excursion in the vicinity of the Deaf Man's Village, the residence of the white woman, widow of the chief whose name gave the title to the village. He was belated and darkness coming on he concluded to remain over night at the house. He knew her well, and could speak the language of the people of her tribe. "She provided me with a good supper and ordered wood to be piled on the big hearth, to my surprise, as our supper was over and the Indian bed-time had arrived. After sitting a half hour or so, and talking over ordinary matters about her family, her crops and her cattle, and the fact that she was well off in the necessities of life, I told her that I would retire to my bed. She said, 'No, I have something on my mind. I am old and weak. I shan't live long, and I must tell it. I can't die in peace if I don't.'"

The Colonel said that here followed a long pause, during which she kept her eyes constantly on the fire and her body moving back and forth in her big arm chair, apparently in pain, at least in great agitation of mind. "I did not wish to break the long silence. The family had all left us; she and I were alone.

"In this condition she remained at least a half hour. My mind was in an excitable state, for I could not of course divine what the secret was that she would disclose. Finally she motioned with her hand to the stairs, but before I reached the door she said, 'Come back, I must tell it.' I came back and seated myself. A half hour more elapsed and no sound came from the woman's lips. I at last told her she could reveal it to me at another time. 'No, no,' she replied, 'I may die, I may die; and then I will have no rest in the Spirit World!'

"She said she did not wish to tell her secret to any other person, because if she made it public her friends would come and carry her away from her home, and she couldn't endure it--it would kill her.

"I now began to understand what her secret might be. I then assured her that I would protect her in any attempt to remove her from her home or separate her from her children." Colonel Ewing then stated that, with great hesitancy, she proceeded with her story, stopping often with her head to her ear and turning her head half round as though some one was eavesdropping. "When she had completed the narrative, she said: 'There, now, I can die. Oh! you don't know how this has troubled me; something all the time whispered in my ear, you must do it--you must do it, and now it is done--and the great load I have carried over fifty years is off my shoulders; I am a free woman!'" I have given as exact a statement as I remember of the story as it was related to me by Colonel Ewing a quarter Century ago.

Ninth Speaker

Colonel Ewing had never heard of Frances Slocum. The tragic story that had been repeated far and wide for two generations had never penetrated this pioneer region.

The story of old Ma-con-a-quá aroused his native curiosity and kind human interest. He saw that she was an unusual woman to be in an Indian home and that there was more than Indian order and cleanliness about the place. She was treated with marked respect by every member of the Indian family. Though her face had been darkened by exposure, he noted that the skin of her upper arm, when the ruffled sleeve turned up, was fairly white. He could not doubt her story and by patient inquiry induced her to tell all she could remember.

Deeply impressed by what she told him, upon his return to Logansport, he wrote a full statement of all the facts, which follow in part:

"There is now living near this place an aged white woman, who a few days ago told me, while I lodged in the camp one night, that she was taken away from her father's house, on or near the Susquehanna River, when she was very young--five to eight years old, she thinks--by the Delaware Indians, who were then hostile to the whites. She says her father's name was Slocum; that he was a Quaker, rather small in stature, and wore a large brimmed hat; was of sandy hair and light complexion and much freckled; that he lived about half a mile from a town where there was a fort; that they lived in a wooden house two stories high, and had a spring near the house. She says three Delawares came to the house in the daytime, when all were absent but herself, and perhaps two other children; her father and brothers were absent working in the field. The Indians carried her off, and she was adopted into a family of Delawares, who raised her and treated her as their own child. They died about forty years ago, somewhere in Ohio. She was then married to a Miami, by whom she had four children; two of them, both daughters, are now living and she lives with them. Her husband is dead; she is old and feeble and thinks she will not live long.

"These considerations induced her to give the present history of herself, which she would never do before, fearing that her kindred would come and force her away. She has lived long and happy as an Indian, and, but for her color, would not be suspected of being anything else than such. She is very respectable and wealthy, sober and honest. Her name is without reproach."

Tenth Speaker

Thus was found right where we are now the "Little Lost Sister of the Wyoming." But strangely enough more than two years had to pass before this discovery was to reach the surviving brothers and sisters.

Colonel Ewing wrote all the facts in a long letter, January 20, 1835, part of which was quoted by the preceding speaker. He sent the letter to the postmaster of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, which was located in the Susquehanna region. The letter said, in part:

"I have thought that from this letter you might cause something to be inserted in the newspapers of your country that might possibly catch the eye of some of the descendants of the Slocum family, who have knowledge of a girl having been carried off by the Indians some seventy years ago. This they might know from family tradition. If so, and they will come here, I will carry them where they may see the object of my letter alive and happy, though old and far advanced in life.

"I hope you will interest yourself, and, if possible, let her brothers and sisters, if any be alive--if not, their children--know where they may once more see a relative whose fate has been wrapped in mystery for seventy years, and for whom her bereaved and afflicted parents doubtless shed many a bitter tear. They have long since found their graves, though their lost child they never found. I have been much affected with the disclosure, and hope the surviving friends may obtain, through your goodness, the information I desire for them."

This letter was received by the postmistress of Lancaster, who also edited the local paper, The Lancaster Intelligencer; but strange as it may seem, she gave it no attention and it lay unnoticed among discarded papers in the newspaper office for more than two years. In March, 1837, a wide-awake young man, who later became a distinguished editor, took charge of the paper. This old letter of Colonel Ewing came to his attention. He saw its human interest value and immediately published it in a special temperance edition of the paper, which was mailed to clergymen generally throughout Pennsylvania. Thus it came to the notice of an eminent Episcopal minister, who in his younger days, had preached at Wilkes-Barre. He knew the Slocums and remembered well the tragic story of Frances. He sent the paper to Joseph Slocum, one of the younger brothers of Frances, who was still living in the old home at Wilkes-Barre.

The facts fitted the case of the lost Frances perfectly in everything but age. The letter said that the old chieftainess thought she was about eighty. But the brother knew, that this could be a very natural error and he had no doubt that his sister was found. His son, Jonathan J. Slocum, wrote Colonel Ewing August 8, 1837.

"At the suggestion of my father and other relations, I have taken the liberty to write to you, although an entire stranger. We have received, but a few days since, a letter written by you to a gentleman in Lancaster, of this State, upon a subject of deep and intense interest to our family. How the matter should have lain so long wrapped in obscurity we cannot conceive. An Aunt of mine--sister of my father--was taken away when five years old, by the Indians and since then we have only had vague and indistinct rumors upon the subject. Your letter we deem to have entirely revealed the whole matter and set everything at rest. The description is so perfect and the incidents (with the exception of her age) so correct, that we feel confident.

"Steps will be taken immediately to investigate the matter, and we will endeavor to do all in our power to restore a lost relative who has been sixty years in Indian bondage."

Eleventh Speaker

Colonel Ewing immediately answered the Slocum letter, writing from Logansport, August 26, 1837. He said, in part:

"The female I spoke of in January, 1835, is still alive; nor can I for a moment doubt but that she is the identical relative that has been so long lost to your family.

"I feel much gratified to think that I have been thus instrumental in disclosing to yourself and friends such facts in relation to her as will enable you to visit her and satisfy yourselves more fully. She recovered from the temporary illness by which she was afflicted about the time I spent the night with her in January, 1835, and which was, no doubt, the cause that induced her to speak so freely of her early captivity.

"Although she is now, by long habit, an Indian, and her manners and customs precisely theirs, yet she will doubtless be happy to see any of you."

He advised them to come direct to Logansport or Peru and directed them how to proceed in case he himself should be away:

"Inquire for the old white woman, mother-in-law to Brouillette, living on the Mississinewa River, about ten miles above its mouth. There you will find the long lost sister of your father, and, as I before stated, you will not have to blush on her account. She is highly respectable and her name as an Indian is without reproach. Her daughter, too, and her son-in-law, Brouillette, who is also a half-blood, being part French, are both very respectable and interesting people--none in the nation more so. As Indians they live well and will be pleased to see you."

He said in conclusion:

"As to the age of this female, I think she herself is mistaken, and that she is not so old as she imagines herself to be. Indeed, I entertain no doubt but that she is the same person that your family have mourned after for more than half a century past."

Thus the way was opened and the plans were laid for a strange family reunion here at the place where we are now assembled.

Twelfth Speaker

It should be emphasized here that the Slocum family was a typical American family of the pure white Caucasian race. Notwithstanding the tragic loss of the father, killed by Indians when the oldest boy was yet in his "teens", the family had prospered. Everyone of the nine children and reared large and substantial families. It would be hard to find in all our history more representative pioneer American stock than the Slocums.

Now, in 1837, the time when this place became for them a romantic and historic site, three of the brothers and one sister had already passed away. Four brothers and one sister still survived. Ebenezer, the crippled boy of 12, who was released by the Indians upon the frantic appeal of the mother when they took Frances, was 72 years old and too infirm for the trip as was Jonathan also, the baby, whom the mother had rescued from the cradle. The other three, Mary (now Mrs. Towne) aged 69, Isaac, 62, and Joseph, 61, prepared at once for the journey to see their sister, Frances, who was now 64. From their distant homes in Pennsylvania and Ohio, they met at Peru the last week in September, 1837, and came together with an interpreter here to the Deaf Man's Village.

Here they found the wrinkled old Ma-con-a-quá and they knew at once that she was their long lost Frances. Although in her faded hair, no trace remained of the fine chestnut red that had made little Frances beautiful, the Slocum family likeness was plainly stamped upon her features. Isaac remembered that, while playing in their father's shop in their childhood days, he had accidentally crushed with a hammer the right forefinger nail of his sister Frances. He saw here that the same finger nail of Ma-con-a-quá was deformed in the same way and asked her how it happened. She said, "Brother hit with hammer." There was no doubt of her identity, but she gave no sign of interest or emotion. She was stolid as an Indian. She had all the Indian ways of secrecy and suspicion of white people.

Thus was restored in a most touching and dramatic way the association of two brothers and two sisters who had been separated 59 years before in a most tragic manner. They recalled to Frances all the incidents of her capture on that November day in 1778--for all of them were there. Mary had picked up little Joseph and Isaac had clung to his mother's skirts, as they ran from the house while Frances hid under the staircase. But it seemed to awaken no interest in her and she was unmoved while Mary, Isaac, and Joseph were overcome with emotion. A poet has described this affecting scene as the interpreter reported it.

They found her there - the one for whom
They searched as for a gem;
And sore they wept, as memory brought
The dreamlike past to them.

But she was calm and passionless,
And as a statue still;
There were no chords within her breast
At memory's touch to thrill.

Thirteenth Speaker

Let us try to imagine the scene that was enacted here upon this stage. And let us note especially the principal actress, Frances Slocum.

Her face, the face of Ma-con-a-quā, grave and stolid as the face of an Indian--and almost as dark because so wrinkled and weatherbeaten--showed the first sign of feeling in that historic meeting here when they spoke to her about her childhood name. She did not remember it, but when Mary asked, "Was it Frances?" her dark features were lightened a little and she said: "Yes, Franca! Franca!" Of this the poet said:

They questioned her and asked her name;
She said she could not tell!
They breathed that long loved name to her
She smiled and knew it well.

The two brothers and sister, Mary, remained here several hours. They were glad to see how well their long-lost sister lived here as a chieftainess with her two daughters and their husbands and children. Mary wrote of them:

"They are decidedly the most respectable family in the nation, and they are also very wealthy, having upward of a hundred horses and many cattle and hogs. Captain Brouillette is the only Indian who cultivates corn with the plow. He has a yoke of oxen, a wagon, and frequently he takes beef and other articles to market."

The members of this big Indian family were all about here but none of them paid any attention to their white relatives. When they returned to the cabin from looking about the place, Frances (Ma-con-a-quā) was sitting right out there on the ground before her cabin door scraping a fresh deer skin with a knife and she did not stop to look up at them.

They thought they might get her attention better if they could see her away from these Indian surroundings, where she was restrained by Indian secrecy and distrust of all whites, so they asked her to meet them in Peru. She said she would first ask the consent of Chief Francis Godfroy, who had succeeded her husband, She-po-con-ah, as war-chief of the Miamis. He cordially advised her to go. So on the following Sunday, Ma-con-a-quā, with several members of her family came on horseback, riding astride, single file into Peru, all togged out in Indian gala fashion, to see her brothers and sister at a little tavern where the Bearss Hotel now stands.

She brought a fresh venison ham wrapped in a clean white cloth which was offered and accepted as an Indian pledge of friendship. The ice was broken and her reserve gradually wore away. With the aid of friends and interpreters gathered there through the day, the full story of her life came out.

Fourteenth Speaker

She remembered well that the three Indians who captured her ran far into the forest and over the mountains, before they camped that first night in a cave. They travelled north several days to a Delaware village--carrying her all day and making a soft bed of leaves for her at night. She was adopted by an old Delaware chief and squaw and became their child. They were very proud and jealous of her. They kept her hid from white people and taught her to mistrust all whites. They dressed her rich red hair in beautiful Indian style. Sometimes they painted her face and bedecked her with fine Indian beads and rich wampum. All the Indians admired her, almost with superstition, because of her beautiful hair. They called her Ma-con-a-quah, female lion, because she was so strong and swift. She could run like a deer, throw a lasso like a man and could break and ride wild horses. They regarded her almost as a prophetess.

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For several years, up to the end of the Revolution in 1783, she lived among the northern wilds in sound of Niagara Falls. Then they came with her farther west to what is now Indiana soil. She said:

"After these years (1783) my family and another Delaware family removed to Kekionga (now Fort Wayne). I don't know where the other Indians went. This was now our home, and I suppose we lived here as many as twenty-six or thirty years. I was there long after I was full grown, and I was there at the time of Harmar's defeat. At the time this battle was fought the women and children were all made to run north. I cannot remember whether the Indians took any prisoners or brought home any scalps at this time. After the battle they all scattered to their various homes, as was their custom, till gathered again for some particular object. I then returned again to Kekionga. The Indians who returned from this battle were Delawares, Pottawatamies, Shawnees and Miamis."

She was an eye witness to all the stirring history from 1690 to 1795--the campaigns of Harmar, St. Clair, and Wayne, in which the Miamis were the principal fighters and she remembered it well. She said of this:

"I remember how Wayne, or 'Mad Anthony', drove the Indians away and built the fort. The Indians then scattered all over the country, and lived upon game, which was very abundant. After this they encamped all along on Eel River. After peace was made we all returned to Fort Wayne and received provisions from the Americans, and there I lived a long time."

She was first married to a Delaware, who treated her badly and soon ran away. Then, while living at the Miami village, Fort Wayne, she married the Miami chief, She-po-con-ah, and lived with him happily. Her two sons and two daughters were born there. She thought she moved to this place on the Mississinewa about the time of the Battle of Tippecanoe--or maybe a little after, anyhow before 1815. They

chose this spot because of the spring. Her husband, the Deaf Man, did not fight either at Tippecanoe or the Battle of the Mississinewa. Here her chief and their two sons died and were buried on that hill and here her two daughters with their families continued to live with her. It is believed that she had great influence in keeping her people at peace with the whites.

A pathetic thing which showed that the white girl had indeed become an Indian woman happened while Frances (Ma-con-a-quā) was spending that day with her relatives at the little tavern in Peru. Worn out by these strange surroundings, she slipped away and was found soon after lying fast asleep on the back porch, where she had gone to rest outside and to be alone for awhile. It was indeed true of her as Dr. Peck, who knew her well, wrote:

"She looked like an Indian, talked like an Indian, lived like an Indian, seated herself like an Indian, ate like an Indian, lay down to sleep like an Indian, thought, felt and reasoned like an Indian; she had no longings for her original home, or the society of her kindred; she eschewed the trammels of civilized life, and could only breathe freely in the great unfenced out-doors which God gave the Red Man!"

Fifteenth Speaker

With tears in their eyes, the two brothers and sister Mary pleaded with Frances to go back with them to the old home of her mother which was still waiting for her. There she could have the comforts of civilization and be taught the true religion of her parents. She answered sadly, but firmly:

"No, I cannot. I have always lived with the Indians; they have always used me very kindly; I am used to them. The Great Spirit has always allowed me to live with them, and I wish to live and die with them. Your wah-puh-mone (looking glass) may be longer than mine, but this is my home. I do not wish to live any better, or anywhere else, and I think the Great Spirit has permitted me to live so long because I have always lived with the Indians. I should have died sooner if I had left them. My husband and my boys are buried here, and I cannot leave them. On his dying day my husband charged me not to leave the Indians. I have a house and large lands, two daughters, a son-in-law, three grandchildren, and everything to make me comfortable; why should I go and be like a fish out of water?"

Her daughters, who sat near by, agreed with her. The elder, Cut Finger, said, "The fish dies quickly out of water." And the younger, Yellow Leaf, added: "The deer will not live out of the forest."

Then they begged her to come with them only for a visit. To this, she replied.

"I cannot, I cannot, I am an old tree. I cannot move about. I was a sapling when they took me away. It is all gone past. I am afraid I should die and never come back. I am happy here. I shall die here and lie in that graveyard, and they will raise the pole at my grave with the white flag on it, and the Great Spirit will know where to find me. I should not be happy with my white relatives. I am glad enough to see them, but I cannot go, I cannot go. I have done."

She would not leave her Indian home here and she was satisfied with the Indian religion--all of which the poet expressed in the lines:

"Let me stay at my home, in the beautiful West,
Where I played when a child,--in my age let me rest;
Where the bright prairies bloom and wild waters play,
In the home of my heart, dearest friends, let me stay.

"Let me stay where my children in childhood have played,
Where through the green forest, they often have strayed;
They never could bend to the white man's cold sway,
For their hearts are of fire, O, here let me stay!

"You tell me of leaves of the Spirit that speak;
But the Spirit I own, in the bright stars I seek;
In the prairie, in the forest, the water's wild play,
I see Him, I hear Him, - O, then, let me stay!"

Sixteenth Speaker

With mingled feelings, Joseph and Isaac and Mary returned to their distant homes, leaving their long-lost, but now discovered sister, Frances, here in her Indian home. She was their sister but she was as far removed from them as barbarism from civilization. But their hearts were at ease, for she had all she desired and "her name was without reproach." They felt that the hopes of their mother who had gone to her grave thirty years before, firm in her faith that her lost child would yet be found, had been fulfilled.

The story of the finding of the lost sister and her romantic refusal to leave the Indians attracted wide attention and became one of our great historical romances.

Two years later, Joseph Slocum, came here again with two of his grown daughters to visit their Aunt Frances--still Ma-con-a-quah, the Indian chieftainess. One of the daughters kept a very complete journal in which on September 30, 1839, she gave the following graphic description of this place and of her aged aunt.

"This day I visited my aunt; found her living on the banks of the Mississinewa River, Indiana, in what is called a double hut. She is of small stature, not very much bent, had her hair clubbed behind in calico, tied with worsted ferret; her hair is somewhat gray; her eyes a bright chestnut, clear and sprightly for one of her age; her face is very much wrinkled and weatherbeaten. She has a scar on her left cheek received at an Indian dance; her skin is not as dark as you would expect from her age and constant exposure; her teeth are remarkably good. Her dress was a blue calico short gown, a white Mackinaw blanket, somewhat soiled by constant wear; a fold of blue broadcloth lapped around her, red cloth leggings and buckskin moccasins. The interior of her hut seemed well supplied with all the necessities, if not with luxuries. They have a looking glass and several splint bottom chairs. A great many trinkets hang about the house, beads and chains of silver and polished steel. Some of their dresses are richly embroidered with silver broaches, seven and eight rows of broaches as closely as they can be put together. They have many silver earrings. My aunt had seven pairs in her ears; her daughters, perhaps a dozen a piece. They have saddles and bridles of the most costly kind; six men saddles, and one side saddle. They have between fifty and sixty horses, one hundred hogs, seventeen head of cattle, also geese and chickens. Their house is enclosed with a common worm fence, with some outhouses, principally built of logs. A never-failing spring of excellent water is near the door, with a house over it. They have a section of land (which is 640 acres) given to her two daughters."

Shortly after this, a Hoosier artist, George Winter, of Logansport, came here and made of Frances and her humble home oil paintings which are still preserved.

Seventeenth Speaker

Soon after this, in the following year, May 1, 1840, Francis Godfroy, the last great war chief of the Miamis, passed away at his magnificent Mt. Pleasant home a few miles down the river here on the other side and nearer the Wabash. There he had lived in rude feudal splendor, maintaining a great trading station, administering justice and dispensing hospitality to his people with powerful and ready hands. He was a man of giant stature and magnificent appearance--over six feet tall and weighing 340 pounds.

He had succeeded She-po-con-ah, husband of Frances, as principal chief, when the Deaf Man became too old for the service and he had ever been the faithful friend and counsellor of Ma-con-aqua. His funeral on the hillside opposite his home, where the Godfroy Cemetery now is, was attended by all the sorrowing Miamis and hundreds of white people who came to show their respect for the great-hearted, broad-minded chief. It was probably the last great meeting Frances ever attended. She heard the oration delivered at the grave by Wappapinchi, "Black Raccoon," minor chief and a noted orator of the Miamis.

"Brothers: The Great Spirit has taken to himself another of our once powerful and happy, but now rapidly declining nation. The time has been when these forests were densely populated by the red man; but the same hand whose blighting touch withered the majestic frame before us, and caused the noble spirit by which it was animated to seek another abode, has dealt in a like manner with his and our fathers; in a like manner it will deal with us. Death, of late, has been common among us, - so much so that an occurrence of it scarcely attracts our notice. But when the brave, the generous and the patriotic are blasted by it, then it is that the tears of our sorrow freely flow.

"Such is now the case, Our brother who has just left us was brave, generous and patriotic, and as a tribute to his merit, and a reward for his goodness, the tears not only of his own people, but also of many white men, who are here assembled to witness these funeral rites, mingle in sorrow over the death of one they loved.

"At this scene the poor of his people weep, because at his table they were wont to feast and rejoice. The weak mourn his death, because his authority was ever directed to their protection. But he has left the earth, the place of vexation and contention, and is now participating with Pocahontas and Logan in those joys prepared by the Great Spirit for such as well and faithfully discharge their duties here. Brothers, let us follow his example and practice his virtues."

Eighteenth Speaker

In the same year, 1840, shortly after the death of Chief Godfroy, the Miamis made their last great treaty at the forks of the Wabash and Little River near Huntington. In this treaty they agreed to give up all their lands here south of the Wabash and to take up their homes beyond the Mississippi within five years. It was the last sad chapter of the Miamis here on the Mississinewa and the Wabash. In spirit language, we may hear them say:

"The years have passed. The white man came
In numbers great, and with his coming our star waned.
Here you behold how from my people
Passed their land. We, the Miamis,
Have fought and lost, and made our peace.
Our lands are forfeit; the great White Father
Sends his men to call us into council,
And there with heavy hearts,
We tender over by this present treaty
The dear possessions which we could not hold."

As the time drew near for the Indians to be taken away in 1845 and 1846, according to the treaty, Frances became greatly troubled. She did not want to leave this place which had been her home for more than 30 years. She wanted to live and die here and be buried by her chief and her children.

Through the influence of her brothers and her white friends here at Peru, a petition was presented to Congress asking that she be permitted to keep this home and receive her tribal annuities here with her children and grandchildren. It recited the main facts of her life and asserted:

"That she is too old to endure the fatigue of removing; and that under any circumstances she would deplore the necessity of being placed beyond the reach of her white relatives, who visit her frequently, and have extended their kindness towards her since she was discovered by them. That her children are the owners of a section of land granted to them by the treaty between the United States and said tribe of Indians of the sixth of November, A.D. 1838, who now reside upon and cultivate the same, and with whom your memorialist now lives, and that it is the wish and design of her children and their families, if it be the pleasure of the Government, to continue to reside upon and cultivate the same."

This petition was supported by Judge Cole of Peru in a vigorous written argument in which he said:

"She says she has lived a life of hardships and is now quite old, and wishes to spend the remainder of her days among her children, on their lands here; and she does not see why her great white father should not grant them the same privilege to

remain here upon their lands, and receive their annuities here, as have been granted to some other families.

"I am well acquainted with the old lady, and all of her connexions which she alludes to, and feel authorized to say that they are respectable, honest, and, for Indians, uncommonly industrious people, and, in every sense of the word, good orderly citizens."

On January 28, 1845 this petition was adopted in the Congress of the United States as a joint resolution by unanimous consent, after a most eloquent address, attributed to John Quincy Adams, the congressman from her childhood home in Pennsylvania, which concluded with these words:

"Frances Slocum was taken from her white friends when a child. She is now desirous of dying among her red friends where she has lived for half a century without being compelled to remove west of the Mississippi. Let her first and last request be granted."

Such was her attachment for this spot that she could not leave it. Her love for this place should endear it to us.

Nineteenth Speaker

The Miami Indians were removed from here in 1846. They were taken away from their homes under military guard. They offered a sorrowful spectacle as they were moved by soldiers down the Mississinewa and up the Wabash. Frances could never forget the sad faces of her Indian brethren as they looked back for the last time upon their homes and the graves of their loved ones. Indians had a deep reverence for the burial places of their fathers. It was true of these Miamis as expressed in Hiawatha:

And they painted on the grave-posts
Of the graves yet unforgotten,
Each his own ancestral totem,
Each the symbol of his household-
Figures of the bear and reindeer,
Of the turtle, crane and beaver.

All about here the empty Indian huts gradually crumbled to decay and graves of dear ones were neglected. The Indian dogs that had to be left behind were for many moons a touching reminder. Left without masters to care for them, hundreds of starving dogs roamed all about here sometimes in great packs. Frances fed many of them with her own hands here at her home. The white settlers had to organize to shoot them down, for sometimes in great numbers they fell upon the live stock of nearby farms. Their mournful howls proclaimed through all hours of the night for several moons the sad departure of their Indian masters.

New and strange settlers began coming in and lawless characters abounded. Horse stealing was quite common and hard to prevent or punish. Frances had large numbers of ponies, sometimes as many as three hundred--as well as lots of other stock and much poultry. She always tried to keep close check upon her property. She loaned money--as much as \$300.00 at a time. Her sense of thrift and accumulation was her white inheritance, as Indians seldom possessed it. She said she would live in a better house, but feared to do it on account of the jealousy of the Indians. She knew she was losing stock and with the passing of her Indian people, she feared she might lose everything.

In this dilemma, she sent appeals to her white brothers to come to her assistance. Joseph could not make the trip again from distant Wilkes-Barre, but Isaac came from his home in Bellevue, Ohio. She asked him to let her have his son, George, who was preparing for the life of a minister and missionary. Isaac promised to send him if he could come. In her gratitude for this promise, she made her faithful brother a gift of her best horse and saddle.

Reverend George Slocum came before the end of the year and started a small mission here near the home of his aged Aunt Frances. It is good to know that at the end of a life of paganism, the White Rose of the Miamis was permitted to enjoy the sympathy and assistance of her own white people.

Twentieth Speaker

One of the last and most authentic expressions about Frances by one who knew her was by Gabriel Godfroy, son of the great chief, Francis Godfroy, who spent his entire life near this place. In a speech on the battleground of Tippecanoe at a great Indian gathering there, June 16, 1907, Gabriel Godfroy said:

"My second wife was a grand-daughter of Frances Slocum. I often saw Frances Slocum. She looked like a squaw, not like a white woman. She was a pretty large woman but not very tall. Her picture looks like her. I married the grand-daughter of Frances Slocum.

"The Miamis, all except three families, were sent across the Mississippi in 1846, to Kansas, and afterwards to the Territory. Frances grieved when her people were sent away, and soon died, in 1847. Her daughter died the same month.

"Frances was stolen by a Delaware Indian and lived near Niagara Falls. This Delaware Indian would never stay where there were many Indians, but would move way off to himself for fear some one would steal the child. Frances was a very stout young girl. She would break ponies and could jump on ponies when they were running. One day when she was living with her Delaware father, she found a wounded Indian leaning against a tree. She and her Delaware Indian father took this Indian, who was a Miami, and nursed him back to health. When he got well he hunted for the Delaware, who was getting old, to pay him for taking care of him. When the Delaware came to die, he said to the man, 'You have been good to me. You shall have this white woman for a wife.' So after the death of the Delaware, this Miami who was deaf, took Frances as his wife, and went back among the Miamis, where he had been chief soldier, and became chief, and lived at Deaf Man's Village, on the Mississinewa. He died in 1833. I have sold the relics of Frances Slocum for three hundred dollars, and they have gone to Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, and to Detroit. I had to have the money."

Many relics of Frances Slocum are still to be found hereabouts, but the most valuable ones are in great museums.

(This speech can be omitted if the recital seems long.)

Twenty-first Speaker

It is believed that Frances Slocum never recovered from the grief she felt at the passing of the Indians from this place. In her Indian character of Ma-con-a-quā, she continued to mourn the departure of her red friends. She passed away peacefully on this spot March 9, 1847, at the age of 74. She died in the new house that she had built not long before her death here on the brow of the hill near the grave of her chief, She-po-con-ah. Her Indian children and grand-children were about her and she received consolation and support during the last few months of her life from her white nephew, the young Christian minister, Reverend George Slocum. But she died in the Indian faith. She could see no difference between the Great Spirit of the Indians and the God of the white man. And as she had always lived according to the teachings of her Indian parents, she believed that the Great Spirit would find her out and take her to the Happy Hunting Grounds, where her Indian chief and her Indian boys had already gone. A long pole with a white flag on it was erected at her grave, according to the Miami custom.

She was given Christian burial. Her nephew, assisted by another Baptist clergyman, offered prayer at the house and conducted a brief ceremony at the grave. Her brother, Isaac, too old and infirm to attend her burial here, had a funeral sermon preached for her in the Baptist Church at Bellevue, Ohio, where he lived, from the eighth verse of the thirty-ninth chapter of Psalms: "I am become a stranger unto my brethren and an alien unto my mother's children." Her grave was unmarked for more than fifty years. The Slocums throughout America aided by public-spirited citizens here erected this monument and unveiled it with public ceremonies, May 17, 1900.

Here in view of that monument where her remains are forever at rest, standing near the site where her last home stood in the very heart of Deaf Man's village of the Miamis, surely we may feel communion with the spirit of Frances Slocum and her simple people. Their huts have crumbled and their moccasined footprints have been erased but their beautiful river--Mississinewa, Falling Waters-- flows on the same; the ever-flowing spring still gives forth its bubbling waters the same as when it slaked their thirst through countless moons and its silver branch winding around the spot where her cabin stood for thirty years ripples with memories of Ma-con-a-quā, White Rose of the Miamis.

In her we see the kinship of the races and their natural amalgamation. Let it be remembered in justice to a pagan race, that they took a tender white girl, kept her through a long life, and made her love them and become like them, and when found with them in her old age, the white man's historic record was: "Her name is without reproach."

On this spot she saw the passing of the noble Red Man. Here she saw an Indian emporium supplanted by the white man's civilization. Here in her spirit and under the spell of these surroundings, we may receive the Indian greeting and farewell.

We are gone--down into the vastness of the Past,
Crushed by civilization's onward march,
With folded wigwams toward the setting sun
We have gone.
Time has made us poor to make you rich,
And naught remains of us but name and memory.
But we have left a story rich in romance,
The story of Ma-con-a-quā.
You call her Frances Slocum, we the White Rose.
In her story is reflected
The history of your beginnings.



